

What Did They Aim For (When They Missed Your Heart)?

by ParadiseAvenger

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Summary: Hiccup had always thought dragons were dangerous until he catches an invisible spirit. He starts to look at the dragons differently. Then, he looks at everything differently. HiJack. Temperature Play and Eventual Lemon. (5 Chapters.) MOVED!

What Did They Aim For (When They Missed Your Heart)?

I'm so seriously flaky! I just can't decide whom I like to pair with Jack Frost. I've written him with Rapunzel in "I Would Have Died (I Would Have Loved You)" and I started on one of him with Elsa! Now I'm even trying him with Hiccup. What is wrong with me? Just like in my other Jack Frost stories, I plan this to be five chapters ending with a nice lemon.

Title inspired by Within Temptation's song, "Shot in the Dark."

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Anyway, I have ****MOVED**** this story ****COMPLETELY**** to another site. You can find this ****STORY**** and all its subsequent ****UPDATES**** ****here****, just remove the spaces and asterisks (*): [h*t*t*p : / / archiveofourown. o*r*g /works/1741739/chapters/3718565](http://archiveofourown.org/works/1741739/chapters/3718565)

I have the same penname there as I do here: ParadiseAvenger

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It was hard to say exactly when Hiccup Horrendous Haddock the Third started hallucinating. Hiccup could first remember seeing it on one of the many nights when Berk was under dragon-fire. He was working Gobber's forge, as usual, while all the other teens rushed about to save the village from fiery destruction, as usual. Then, he saw it.

It was just a glimpse, just a flash, an image so quick it might have been only a trick of the light. Amidst the starry night sky and the raging dragons, there was a brightness that didn't belong. It didn't look like any dragon Hiccup had ever heard of or seen. It was white and blue and it looked like a person but it moved too fast. It was there for a momentâ€”Hiccup blinkedâ€”and then it was gone.

"I'm hallucinating," Hiccup told himself. "I got hit in the head."

Since he had taken a few knocks when he rushed from his house to the blacksmith's shop, he let himself believe that. He watched Astrid, Fishlegs, Snotlout, and the Thorston Twins rush about to put out fires. They moved with importance, as if they were bringing rain to the barren desert. They were so cool and Hiccup wished he could be like them, but he wasn't and he knew it. He would never be like themâ€”he was different and that was a bad thing.

Hiccup sharpened another sword, focusing on the burn of the forge and the searing keen of hot metal. He tried not to think about the dragons, about the Vikings, about how he had been banished to the shop so he'd be out of the way.

He didn't think about the hallucination anymore.

Even though Hiccup tried to put it out of his mind, he started hallucinating more and more. Every time he turned his head, the fleeting quicksilver mirage was there. It was always gone before he could look at it properly enough to decide what it was. It danced in the sky among the clouds, it swirled over the ocean, it ducked behind newly-built houses, and then it was always gone.

"It's a dragon," Hiccup told himself. "It's just another dragon. It has to be."

The next day, the village was busy. There were houses to be rebuilt, broken weapons to be mended, sheep and yaks to be corralled, and problems to fix. The sky was a shade of metal and covered in a thick blanket of snow-bearing clouds. A cold breeze was blowing in off the ocean and the promise of snow was as imminent as dragons would be that night.

Hiccup was chilly even as he worked at the forge, with no beard or body fat to protect him from the stiff breeze. He worked the bellows, listening half-heartedly to Gobber as the one-handed man lectured him on all the ways he was doing everything wrongâ€”again.

"You've just got to stop all this," Gobber continued. "Maybe work out instead of building weirdâ€”" He glanced at Hiccup's most recent invention standing in the corner of the shop. Hiccup intended it to throw a bola (1), but some calibration issues had it doing more harm than help. "â€”things," Gobber finished.

"I know, I know, Gobber," Hiccup muttered and stepped up to the anvil. He lifted a small hammer and went to work pounding out arrowheads.

Gobber felt silent for a few minutes and apparently decided that he had scolded Hiccup enough. He began singing loudly and incredibly off-key about his axe, his mace, and his wife with an ugly face. He

changed his hand from a stone to a hammer and began pounding away at a dull sword with a bent blade.

They worked in companionable silence for a while. Even though Gobber was Stoick's right-hook-man, he understood Hiccup in a way that his own father never would. Gobber knew that Hiccup wanted his dad to be proud of him more than anything. Even though Hiccup's efforts were often misguided or didn't work out and Gobber scolded him, it was never mean-spirited. Gobber wanted Hiccup and Stoick to get along almost as badly as Hiccup did.

Sighing, Hiccup paused in his work and wiped his brow with the back of his hand. He had a small pile of arrowheads at his elbow. All that remained to do was to sharpen them. He glanced out the nearby window and noticed the first fat fluffy flakes of snow were beginning to fall.

Abruptly, Hiccup spotted someone he didn't recognize among the villagers. It was a boy, roughly Hiccup's own fourteen winters in age, dressed in a strange cloak and blue tunic. He carried a useless-looking spear with a crooked top, but he was even slimmer than Hiccup was so he doubted he could actually wield it. The boy stood out with his bright white hair and moon-pale skin, nothing like the ruddy and bearded Vikings. He was shockingly barefoot, even though it was beginning to snow.

Hiccup moved a little closer to the window, looking out and studying the strange visitor. Could this boy be the son of a visiting chief or maybe an invader? Yet he moved so easily through the village. No one tried to stop him and no one even glanced his way.

Then, in an instant so fast Hiccup thought he imagined it, one of the villagers walked right through the boy. The boy's figure wavered slightly and he paused for only a moment to press a hand to his chest. A moment later, he continued as if nothing had happened and the villager had never reacted at all.

Startled, Hiccup threw himself away from the window, stumbled over a stack of broken weapons, and fell sprawled on his back. The heat of the forge was close, painfully close. He swiftly jolted to his feet and rushed back to the window. The cold air kissed his heated skin and he let out a quick breath.

"What in the name of Thorâ€" Gobber began, cutting off his song mid-word as he turned to stare at Hiccup.

The boy was gone though.

"Nothing," Hiccup said quickly. "It's nothing. I justâ€| thought I saw a dragon, is all."

Gobber peered out the window at the empty grey sky. "No harm in being watchful," he said as he straightened the fallen weapons. "Why don't you finish up and go on home? It's been a long day. I might need you if dragons come back tonight."

Hiccup nodded, his eyes still trained on the villagers as they moved about their routines of mending, fixing, and collecting. No one looked puzzled or troubled. No one looked as if they had just walked through a strange boy. No one looked as if they had seen a ghost.

Everything was peaceful and quiet.

"You're hallucinating again," Hiccup muttered to himself. "You need to get more sleep and cut back on the nog."

"Did you say something?" Gobber asked.

"Nothing," Hiccup said. He scooped up the pile of arrowheads, carried them to the grindstone, and began sharpening. Every so often, his eyes strayed to the window and scanned the faces that passed. He didn't see the strange boy again and it began to snow harder.

By the time Hiccup finished and left the shop, Berk was deep in the throes of a hideous blizzard. It didn't look like the dragons would be coming either. They were probably hunkered down somewhere around a nice fire, eating all the sheep they had managed to steal the night before. Hiccup staggered home through the buffeting winds and slammed in through the front door.

His father, Stoick the Vast, was sitting in front of the hearth with a mug of something Hiccup wasn't allowed to drink yet.

"Hey Dad," Hiccup said lamely as he stomped the snow off his boots.

"Everything go alright at the shop today?" Stoick asked mechanically without ever lifting his eyes from the fire.

"Yeah," Hiccup told him. "It was fine. I made a bunch of arrowheads."

"No swords?" Stoick asked before thinking about it.

Hiccup's face fell and he turned towards the stairs. "No," he said bitterly. He didn't admit that he couldn't work with metal that large or heavy and Stoick didn't try to salvage the conversation. Hiccup climbed the stairs and disappeared into his bedroom.

It remained silent and still downstairs.

Hiccup sank down at his desk and stared at all the plans he had made to recalibrate his bola thrower. He was pretty sure he knew what was wrong with it, but what was the point of fixing it? Even if he caught and managed to kill a dragon, he doubted it would be enough to please his father. So long as he used his inventions instead of his own strength, he wouldn't be a Vikingâ€”not in his father's eyes at leastâ€”and that was the only thing that mattered.

Hiccup crumpled the designs with both hands and threw them into the fire. He watched them burn, choking on smoke and heat and biting cold. Startled, Hiccup turned towards the window and saw a flash of white and blue through the small slat between the shutters. Then, there was only the swirling of countless snowflakes and the window was empty.

"That hallucination again," he grumbled.

Hiccup threw himself down on his hard bed and mashed his face into his pillow. He tried not to think about everything that went wrong that day, but it was hard not to go through the highlights. He

couldn't make a sword, he'd failed at moving some building supplies in front of Astrid, and his father was displeased with him as usual. The storm continued long after Hiccup fell asleep, howling at the roof like a living thing that wanted to get in.

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A few days passed and Hiccup was almost able to put the hallucination out of his mind. The dragons returned with a vengeance as soon as the blizzard abated. With all the snow, fewer houses caught fire, but there was still a fair amount of damage. Stoick busied himself with fixing the village and left Hiccup with Gobber, but Gobber was just as busy as Stoick was and he had a little trust for Hiccup even if that wasn't saying much. Hiccup found himself alone in the blacksmith's shop, staring at the fire like it was going to tell him something.

Then, he saw it againâ€"that flash that lasted as long as a blink, blue and white, quick like a snowflakeâ€"his hallucination.

Hiccup whirled around and rushed to the window. He put both hands on the wide sill and looked out at the sky. Several other villagers had stopped and were staring up at the sky as well. For a moment, Hiccup thought maybe his hallucination wasn't just a mirage after all. Then, there was a signature cry and a flash of ink cut through the clouds.

"Night Fury!" a woman shouted.

"Get down!" a man echoed.

A child screamed.

There was a flare of light followed by the unmistakable sound of one of the catapults being destroyed. A moment later, the dragons returned as if they had been waiting in the wings. The dark sky lit up with fire and flakes. Hiccup grabbed the handles of his bola thrower and ran through the snow, slipping and sliding as he heaved his machine up the crest of the nearby hill. There, he had an unobstructed view of the sky. He readied his invention, pulling back the many handles and levers until it was ready to fire.

Dragons filled the sky. They breathed endless fire, swooped this way and that, and fled into the night with sheep.

Hiccup didn't aim at any of them. Instead, he waited. He waited for the Night Fury to return.

Time seemed to crawl. Even though he was aware of the flicker of white and blue at the edge of his vision, he didn't turn his gaze from the sky. The Night Fury would return soon. He sensed it in his blood, in his Viking soul. The dragon was close.

If he could take down the Night Fury, maybe his father would finallyâ€"

Suddenly, the black shape moved against the clouds. The snowflakes swirled in the wake of the great dragon and he saw the faint glow of the fire in its throat as it prepared to take out another catapult. Hiccup jerked the bola thrower into position and yanked the trigger.

With fierce recoil that knocked him off his feet, the bola hurled through the air. Hiccup sat up quickly and scanned the skyline just in time to see the Night Fury fall with a howl.

"Yes!" Hiccup shouted and leaped to his feet. He threw his hands in the air in victory. "Yes! I did it! Did anyone see that?"

But he was alone on the crest of the cliff.

Distantly, he could hear the riot of noise that was his village fighting away the dragons. He could hear his father's booming voice over everything else. Maybe now his father would finally be proud. Night Furies were rare and intelligent. No one had ever been able to take one down before and Hiccup had been the first.

Something fluttered at the edge of his vision and Hiccup turned to look before he could remind himself that he was just hallucinating again. For the first time, the fleeting image wasn't gone when he turned and Hiccup's breath caught in his throat like a stone.

It was the boy he had seen in the village, the one who had been walked through like a ghost. He looked just the same as he had that day, right down to his clothes and his curiously bare feet even though there was a sheet of snow on the ground. His white hair caught the moonlight, glittering as if frosted, and his eyes were the brightest blue Hiccup had ever seen. For a moment, he just stared at the strange boy and the boy stared right back without blinking.

Then, behind Hiccup, there came an ominous crunch. Hiccup turned just as a Monstrous Nightmare crested the cliff side and crushed the bola thrower beneath one large clawed foot. Hiccup stared at the dragon for a full heartbeat before his legs caught up with the instinct in his brain.

He ran.

When he thought to look back, the strange boy was gone and so was the dragon. Only the crushed remnants of his invention remained, reminding him that he had been hallucinating a lot lately. Hiccup paused, breathing hard, and considered the empty knoll before him. After a moment, he hurried back up to the ruins of his machine and stooped to feel the wreckage in his hands. Only something as large as a dragon could have demolished his machine so maybe he hadn't hallucinated that part.

A paleness flickered at the edges of his vision.

Hiccup turned his head and saw that the strange boy was standing at the edge of the cliff, eerily backlit by fire and moonlight and snow. He was still holding that ridiculous staff and the tail of his cloak fluttered in the stiff sea breeze. Again, he just stared at Hiccup without speaking. Then, he stepped back over the boundary of the cliff and disappeared.

Hiccup rushed to the edge, heart in his throat for someone he didn't even know, and looked down at the churning waves. Just as he did, the boy swooped up past his face like a bird. Tossed by the wind, the boy hovered high above Hiccup for a moment and then darted off into the snow-laden clouds.

For a moment, Hiccup just stared at the empty sky. He was dimly aware that the noise in the village was beginning to abate as the dragons were driven off, but he could only think of that strange boy. There was no way he had seen that. It just wasn't possible. No one could fly like that—"no human could fly like that"—but he was unable to convince himself that he had hallucinated or imagined it.

Hiccup gathered the ruins of his bola thrower and rolled it all back to Gobber's shop. Luckily, the village was so busy that hardly anyone noticed him. Tomorrow, he would fix the machine again, he would go looking for the Night Fury, and then he would use the bola thrower to catch that strange flying boy. What would his father think if he managed that? Maybe Stoick the Vast could finally wear an expression that wasn't disappointment involving his only son.

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Two mornings passed. It dawned painfully bright as rare sunlight reflected off the layers of snow and ice that coated Berk like a blanket. Hiccup left the house before Stoick was even awake and went straight to Gobber's shop to retrieve his repaired bola thrower. He had redesigned it and managed to significantly lighten it while making it easier to maneuver. Hiccup rolled it through the snow towards the dense forest of Raven Point where the Night Fury had gone down two nights ago.

Even though Hiccup had gone looking for the dragon yesterday and the day before, he still hadn't had any luck locating it. All the while, his mirage continued to dance just out of sight without ever appearing completely. It was infuriating.

"Some Vikings lose a sword or a wife, but not me," Hiccup grumbled as his machine rumbled and bounced over the rocky terrain. "I manage to lose an entire dragon and a—" He hesitated. What exactly should he call his hallucination? A ghost, a god, a spirit? Finally, he exclaimed, "A flying boy!"

The wind seemed to laugh at him.

A few hours later, Hiccup paused, took his notebook from his pocket, and crossed off another section of Raven Point. The hand-drawn map was a mess of Xs and smudges. The Night Fury didn't seem to be anywhere. Where could the beast have gone? Had it just disappeared, like the flying boy? Like all of Hiccup's other hallucinations?

With a huff, Hiccup stuffed the notebook back into his pocket and pushed aside a nearby branch. The foliage parted like a curtain and revealed the great shattered ruins of a large pine tree. It looked as if something had smashed into the tree from a great height. Hiccup quickly approached the tree, dragging his bola thrower with him, and scrutinized it.

There was a fissure leading away from the tree. Hiccup's heart began to pound. Something big had made this crater and destroyed this tree. It had to be the dragon. As he raced along the gouge in the earth, he almost completely forgot about the flying boy. He crested a small hill and there it was, spread out like a Thanksgiving Day feast.

The Night Fury lay in the dirt, trussed up in the bola. Plants and

small trees had been destroyed around it in a small circle, as if the great beast had been struggling to break free.

Hiccup quickly unsheathed the tiny dagger he carried in his belt and clambered down the hill to the dragon's side. The creature was still alive, breathing shallowly, as Hiccup looked it over. Oh, Odin! the Night Fury had been so terrifying when it was attacking the village, but now! it looked small and fragile. It peered up at Hiccup with bright green eyes, pitiable, frightened, as it gazed at his knife.

"I'm going to kill you dragon," Hiccup heard himself whisper. "I'll cut out your heart and take it to my father. Maybe then he'll!"

Something flickered at the edge of Hiccup's vision, flashing there like a ghost.

The Night Fury made a soft sound, closed its eyes, and turned away as best it could. It was then that Hiccup knew he'd never be able to hurt the poor beast. It was afraid and probably hungry. Maybe it was just doing what it had to do to please its own father. Hiccup stared at the knife in his hand and turned away for a moment.

The boy was standing there, like his conscience, watching silently.

Hiccup turned back to the dragon and then slid to his knees. He cut away the ropes of the bola as quickly as possible. He didn't doubt that the dragon might try to take revenge the moment he freed it, but he couldn't leave it tied up forever. That would be crueler than outright killing it. The ropes loosened and fell. The dragon's strong body twitched and it drew in a deep breath. Then, the last of the restraints fell away and the dragon was free. Hiccup stumbled backwards, heart in his throat, but the dragon's green eyes lit upon him like a physical touch. For a moment, they just stared at each other. Then, the Night Fury leaped to its feet in a great downward flap of strong wings and disappeared into the dense forest.

Hiccup heard branches breaking as he let out a breath he didn't know he had been holding and turned away from the site of the dragon's fall. The strange boy flickered at the edge of Hiccup's vision, white and blue, and then was gone. The trees remained, whispering as if they knew something Hiccup never would. A cool breeze ghosted through Hiccup's hair. It was all quiet and still.

Hiccup stared at the bola thrower. What would he do with his dangerous machine now? It wasn't as if he would ever be able to capture the Night Fury again and he was having doubts about catching the strange flying boy. What good was the thrower? What good was Hiccup? What good was any of this?

The trees moved, danced, with the breeze. Patterns of frost swirled across the depression of ruined plants and snow-dusted soil like seeking fingers.

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The sun was setting like cold fire on the horizon when Hiccup returned to Gobber's blacksmith shop with the bola thrower in tow and

tucked it into the back room where Gobber let him hide all his little inventions from his father. He kicked up drifts of snow as he headed home.

Stoick the Vast was sitting at the fire with his feet stretched out towards the flames.

"Hey Dad," Hiccup muttered as he closed the door at his back.

"It's positively freezing out there," Stoick said evenly. "Old Man Winter's brought us quite the storm."

"Shouldn't you be happy for that, Dad?" Hiccup asked as he came to warm up beside the fire. "With all this snow, the dragons have calmed down and it's harder for things to catch on fire."

Stoick chuckled. "Very true," he said. "Winter does love Berk. Something, I think this place is Jokul Frosti's favorite vacationing spot."

"Jokul Frosti?" (2) Hiccup repeated as he lifted the lid on the pot of stew and peered inside.

"I used to tell you stories about him when you were littleâ€|" Stoick trailed off, eying Hiccup's slim shoulders and diminutive stature.

Hiccup sent up a silent prayer to Odin that he and his father could have one conversation where Hiccup's size didn't come into play. Already, he could see Stoick's features washing into a mask of disappointment and frustration.

After a moment, the expression passed. Stoick cleared his throat and continued as if he had never mentioned how tiny and worthless his son was. "Jokul Frosti was one of your favorite stories. I used to tell you all about the sprite that brings winter and snow and ice. I always used to tell you that he nipped your nose to keep you from playing outside for too long. You used to be convinced that you'd lose your entire nose to Jokul Frosti." Stoick chuckled and smiled fondly at the memory.

Hiccup ladled out a bowl of stew and sat down beside his father, soaking up this rare moment of conversation. "And?" he encouraged.

Stoick glanced over at Hiccup, studying him for a moment. The affection in his eyes was like a warm embrace, but as he watched Hiccup eat, the happiness began to fade. "It's just an old story," he said coolly. "We have more important things to worry about than the legend of winter."

Hiccup swallowed, his throat closing over the stew that had been delicious only moments ago. "Butâ€|"

"Jokul Frosti isn't real, Hiccup," Stoick said sternly. "You need to stop chasing legends. You need to stop all this."

Hiccup rose sharply from his seat, put aside his bowl, and turned away from his father.

"Someday," Stoick called after him and his voice followed like an arrow to pierce Hiccup's heart. "You'll have to take my place as the village's chief. You can't go chasing after stories and trolls. You can't keep being like this. You're not a child anymore. It's not real. They're just stories!"

Hiccup stopped at the top of the stairs and shouted down, "What if it's not? What if it's all real?"

"It's not real," Stoick shouted back. "Jokul Frosti is just a story. No one brings winter or flies in the face of storms!"

Hiccup slammed his bedroom door, cutting off any further dagger-like words. He leaned against the roughhewn wood and stared at the floor for a long time. He thought of the Night Fury he had managed to capture, of the hallucination dancing at the edges of his vision, of the strange barefoot boy he had seen in the snow. Why was it no matter what he did Stoick was never happy with him?

"Jokul Frosti," Hiccup repeated.

Even if he couldn't find it in his heart to kill a dragon, Hiccup was sure he could find the strength to capture the spirit of winter. How hard could it be? He could bring Jokul Frosti to his father and show him, once and for all, that Hiccup could be wiser and more clever than anyone. Any Viking could kill a dragon, but how many could catch a sprite?

Moreover, Hiccup knew exactly where to start looking. Now that Stoick had reminded him of the old stories of Jokul Frosti, all the old memories were coming back. Hiccup pushed away the happy ones—the glimpses of his mother, the flare of his father's smile and strong arms lifting Hiccup to the sky, the happiness of being loved.

Instead, he focused on the facts. Jokul Frosti could fly, could bear the unspeakable cold, and could spread snow and frost. Although he was a trickster and dangerous if provoked, Hiccup would just have to be faster. He would catch the sprite before he even had a chance to escape. Hiccup had just the device to capture Jokul Frosti, too. If his bola thrower was strong enough to take down a Night Fury, it was certainly powerful enough to snare the spirit of winter.

The flash of blue and white danced through the slat of the shuttered window, teasing Hiccup. That strange flying boy had to be Jokul Frosti. What else could explain the way he moved through the village unnoticed and barefoot? It explained why he was everywhere and how he could fly with the same ease of a dragon.

Hiccup didn't let himself think about why he appeared to be the only one who could see the strange boy. He didn't let himself think about hallucinations, disappointed fathers, or Viking teens that would always be stronger than he would. He went to his desk and sat there, sketching designs for shackles that would be able to hold the winter sprite.

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Please, check out my first ORIGINAL NOVEL! The Breaking of Poisonwood by **Paradise Avenger**. (Summary: People were dead. When Skye Davis

bought me at a slave auction as a birthday present for his brother, I had no idea what my new life was going to be like, but I had never expected _this_. It all started when Venus de Luna was killed and I was to take her place, to become the new savior. Then, bad things happened and some people died. In the heart of the earth, we discovered the ancient being that Frank Davis had found and created and used to his advantage. The _Poisonwood_")

(1) A bola is a throwing weapon made of weights on the ends of interconnected cords. It's designed to capture animals by entangling their legs.

(2) The legend of Jack Frost actually begins with Anglo-Saxon or Norse roots. They call him Jokul Frosti.

Questions, comments, concerns?

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End
file.